

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L BONN 16331

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: EEC, XJ, SF, GW
SUBJECT: US-FRG PRESIDENCY DIALOGUE: READOUT ON
POLITICAL DIRECTORS' MEETING, BONN, SEPTEMBER
5-6, 1978: AFRICA

REFS: A) BONN 13785; B) BONN 15575; C) STATE 221828

1. FOREIGN OFFICE EC PRESIDENCY OFFICER STABREIT TOLD
US AFRICAN THEMES WERE A MAJOR TOPIC OF DISCUSSION AT
THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS' MEETING. HE GAVE US THE
FOLLOWING BRIEF:

2. THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS DISCUSSED A WORKING GROUP
REPORT ON MEASURES WHICH MIGHT BE TAKEN TO PROD SOUTH
AFRICA TOWARD AN EASING OF APARTHEID AND GREATER
FLEXIBILITY ON SOUTHERN AFRICAN ISSUES IN GENERAL. THEY
WERE UNABLE TO REACH A DECISION ON THE DISPOSITION OF
THE REPORT AND OPTED TO PRESENT IT TO MINISTERS FOR
FURTHER CONSIDERATION. STABREIT NOTED THAT SOME
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DELEGATIONS (HE MENTIONED THE FRG AND THE UK) FELT
STRONGLY THAT IT WOULD BE INOPPORTUNE TO PRESS SOUTH
AFRICA NOW IN VIEW OF PROGRESS ON NAMIBIA AND THE
DELICATE STAGE OF THE RHODESIAN SITUATION. STABREIT
DECLINED TO SPECIFY WHAT MEASURES WERE CONTAINED IN THE
REPORT.

3. THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS RECOMMENDED THAT THE NINE MAKE A DEMARCHE IN PRETORIA REQUESTING THE RELEASE OF POLITICAL PRISONERS. THE RECOMMENDATION REQUIRES THE APPROVAL OF MINISTERS AND WILL LIKELY BE TAKEN UP AT THE SEPTEMBER 14 MEETING. THE TIMING OF THE PROSPECTIVE DEMARCHE REMAINS OPEN. WE REITERATED THAT THE US WOULD VIEW SUCH A DEMARCHE BY THE NINE WITH FAVOR AND WOULD CONSIDER MAKING A PARALLEL PRESENTATION (REF C, PARA 9). STABREIT UNDERTOOK TO INFORM US OF THE MINISTERS' DECISION. HE BELIEVED IT WOULD BE PREMATURE TO PROVIDE MORE DETAIL ON THE PROSPECTIVE DEMARCHE PRIOR TO MINISTERIAL APPROVAL.

4. STABREIT SAID THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS HAD AVOIDED WHAT WAS EXPECTED TO BE A CONTROVERSIAL DISCUSSION OF DIFFERING STANDARDS OF APPLICATION OF THE EC CODE OF CONDUCT ON SOUTH AFRICA. THE EXPECTED DISAGREEMENTS DID NOT ARISE SINCE THE REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP WAS SIMPLY A BREAKDOWN IN WHICH EACH COUNTRY OUTLINED ITS POLICY; THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS TOOK NOTE OF THE REPORT AND PASSED IT TO MINISTERS. STABREIT DID NOT EXCLUDE THE POSSIBILITY THAT DISCUSSION OF THE REPORT ON SEPTEMBER 14 WOULD BE MORE STIMULATING.

5. THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS WERE UNABLE TO REACH A DECISION ON THE ISSUANCE OF THE LONG-SINCE DRAFTED CONFIDENTIAL

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COMMUNITY DECLARATION ON SPORT CONTACTS WITH SOUTH AFRICA. WHILE THEY MADE NO CHANGES IN THE TEXT, THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS DIFFERED ON THE APPROPRIATENESS OF ISSUING THE DECLARATION NOW AND PASSED THE BUCK TO THE MINISTERS. WE REITERATED THAT THE DEPARTMENT WAS UNINFORMED ON THE CONTENT OF THE COMMUNITY DECLARATION. STABREIT WAS RELUCTANT TO GIVE US A COPY OF THE TEXT OR FURNISH DETAILS IN THE ABSENCE OF A MINISTERIAL DECISION ON ITS RELEASE.

6. THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS REACHED AGREEMENT ON A TEXT DESIGNED TO REFUTE CRITICISM BY THE UN ANTI-APARTHEID COMMITTEE OF THE EC CODE OF CONDUCT. THEY OPTED, HOWEVER, NOT TO ISSUE THE TEXT UNLESS THE COMMITTEE REPEATED ITS CRITICISM.

7. THE AFRICAN WORKING GROUP WAS INSTRUCTED TO DO AN ANALYSIS OF AFRICAN LIBERATION GROUPS AND TO FOLLOW MORE CLOSELY THE SITUATION IN ANGOLA. THE POLITICAL DIRECTORS ALSO AGREED TO RECOMMEND TO MINISTERS THAT THEY FOCUS ON CURRENT AFRICAN PROBLEMS DURING THEIR SEPTEMBER 14 MEETING.

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